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Closing of Government offices on 10th February 1953.

* 93 Q.—Sri P. RANGASAMI REDDIAR: Will the Hon. the Chief Minister be pleased to state why 10th February 1953 was declared a public holiday to mourn the death of India's Defence Minister only for public offices in the City of Madras and not for those in the districts?

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Government offices both in the City and in the districts were asked to be closed on 10th February 1953."

Sri P. RANGASAMI REDDIAR :—" Sir, this is one of the questions that had suffered much in the hands of the Assembly Secretariat, in the course of the amendment. My original question was whether 10th February 1953 was declared a public holiday to mark the death of India's Defence Minister and if so, whether the Government were aware of the fact that all public offices in the State especially outside Madras were *not* closed but were opened as usual, and if the answer is in the affirmative the reason why the offices were not closed in the mufassal? "

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Sir, the hon. Member has put the question in the original form in spite of the correction in the office. I wonder what your ruling will be in regard to that procedure."

Mr. SPEAKER :—" The Speaker has power to amend the question."

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" As a supplementary to the present question the hon. Member has just now put the original question. This is not a practice that could be encouraged as otherwise the amendment made by the office would serve no purpose. I am not objecting to the present question now. I have only explained the correct procedure. However I shall try to explain. Let me not be taken as though I agree to the present procedure. The death was a sudden one and orders were sent immediately that all public offices be closed as a mark of respect. It may be that the offices in the mufassal might not have received the telegram in time and there is no great harm if they had worked."

Mr. SPEAKER :—" As far as the amendment is concerned, I must verify it from the office. I must see the original question. Then only I can say whether the present question has been amended or not."

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" The hon. Member actually says ' my original question was so and so '."

Sri P. RANGASAMI REDDIAR :—" My intention was not to ask why the order was made applicable only to offices in the City of Madras and not to the offices in the districts. My intention was 9-20 a.m.

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not that. My question was, at any rate, the spirit and purport of my question was : an order was passed by the Government to close the offices; in spite of that order, why were the offices in the mufassal not closed? The exact reason seems to be that telegrams were received at 5-15 or 5-30 p.m. in the district courts and sub-courts in the Tiruchirapalli district, and that seems to be the reason. I want to know why there was so much delay in sending the telegrams or in the receipt of the telegrams in the mufassal?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" I am sorry that we are spending so much time on this. The death took place and instructions were given with respect to the flags, with respect to office working and with respect to many other matters; and the instructions from Delhi had to be absorbed here and re-issued to the districts. Wherever it was near, the instructions reached in time, and wherever it was distant, the instructions took some time. There was no case of disobedience or discrimination."

The Foodgrains (Licensing and Procurement) Order.

* 94 *Q.*—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) when the Foodgrains (Licensing and Procurement) Order was received by this Government;

(*b*) the date on which the Order was brought into force in this State;

(*c*) the number of licences so far issued under the order by the Government; and

(*d*) the steps the Government propose to take to prevent unlawful dealers purchasing and selling paddy which is going on on a large scale even to-day?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (*a*) 11th July 1952.

" (*b*) 29th November 1952.

" (*c*) The information cannot be furnished readily without reference to all Commercial Tax Officers, who alone are empowered to grant licences.

" (*d*) If any person is dealing in foodgrains in quantities exceeding fifteen maunds, without a licence, he is liable to be proceeded against criminally besides confiscation of the stocks of foodgrains held by him. Further in the event of any emergency such as unreasonable rise in the prices of foodgrains, necessary powers are already available in the Order to requisition stocks and distribute them at reasonable prices through fair price shops or other Government agencies."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" May I know why the Order was not enforced immediately after it was received from the Central Government?"

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Government thought it was unnecessary."